

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 1 through 4 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please add Claims 5 through 8 to read, as follows.

1. **(Canceled)**

2. **(Canceled)**

3. **(Canceled)**

4. **(Canceled)**

--5. **(New)** An image forming apparatus, comprising:

an image carrier;

charging means for charging said image carrier and toner on said image carrier;

electrostatic image forming means for forming an electrostatic image on said image carrier charged by said charging means;

developing means for electrostatically collecting the toner on said image carrier and for electrostatically developing the electrostatic image by using the toner to form a toner image;

bias applying means for applying a bias to said developing means;

transfer means for transferring the toner image on said image carrier onto a transfer medium; and

control means for executing variable-control of a potential difference between a potential of said image carrier charged by said charging means and the bias applied to said developing means, based on a ratio at which the toner image occupies an area relative to a predetermined area on said image carrier.

6. **(New)** An apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said control means controls the potential difference to be larger as the ratio is larger.

7. **(New)** An apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising a power source for supplying a bias to said charging means, wherein said control means executes variable-control of the bias applied to said charging means, according to the ratio.

8. **(New)** An apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the bias supplied to said charging means from said power source is a voltage obtained by superposing an AC voltage onto a DC voltage, and said control means controls the DC voltage according to the ratio.--